

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device comprising:
 - a semiconductor substrate;
 - a first electrode formed over the semiconductor substrate;
 - a first conductive smoothing layer formed over the first electrode, wherein the first conductive smoothing layer has a surface roughness less than that of the first electrode;
 - a dielectric layer formed on the first conductive smoothing layer; ~~and~~
 - a second electrode formed over the dielectric layer; and
 - a second conductive smoothing layer formed between the dielectric layer and the second electrode, wherein the second conductive smoothing layer has a roughness less than that of the second electrode and wherein the second conductive smoothing layer comprises a refractory metal.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Canceled)
4. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 1, wherein the first electrode comprises a first layer comprising a metal and a second layer comprising a refractory nitride and the second electrode comprises a metal.
5. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 1, wherein the first electrode and the second electrode comprise a refractory nitride.
6. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 5, wherein the refractory nitride comprises a material selected from the group consisting of titanium nitride and tantalum nitride.
7. (Previously Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 5, wherein the first conductive smoothing layer comprises titanium rich nitride.

8. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 1, wherein the dielectric layer comprises a high dielectric constant material.
9. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 1, wherein the first electrode, the first conductive smoothing layer, the dielectric layer and the second electrode are part of a metal-insulator-metal (MIM) capacitor.
10. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 9, further comprising:
a capping layer over the first electrode, wherein the capping layer comprises a refractory nitride and the first electrode comprises a metal.
11. (Previously Amended) A semiconductor device comprising:
a conductive layer;
a smoothing layer formed in contact with the conductive layer, wherein the smoothing layer has a surface roughness less than that of the conductive layer and the smoothing layer comprises titanium rich nitride; and
a dielectric layer formed above and in contact with the smoothing layer.
12. (Canceled)
13. (Previously Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 11, wherein the conductive layer comprises titanium nitride and the smoothing layer comprises titanium.
14. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 11, wherein the conductive layer, the smoothing layer and the dielectric layer are part of a device selected from the group consisting of a transistor and a capacitor.
15. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 11, wherein the conductive layer comprises a first layer comprising a metal and a second layer comprising a refractory nitride.

16. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 11, wherein the dielectric layer is a high dielectric constant material.
17. (Previously Amended) A semiconductor device comprising:
- a semiconductor substrate;
 - a first electrode formed over the semiconductor substrate, wherein the first electrode comprises a first layer comprising metal and a second layer over the first layer, wherein the second layer comprises a refractory nitride;
 - a first smoothing layer formed over the first electrode, wherein the first smoothing layer comprises titanium rich nitride;
 - a dielectric layer formed on the first smoothing layer; and
 - a second electrode formed over the dielectric layer, wherein the second electrode comprises a third layer comprising a refractory nitride and a fourth layer over the third layer, wherein the fourth layer comprises a metal.
18. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 17, wherein the refractory nitride comprises a material selected from the group consisting of titanium nitride and tantalum nitride.
19. (Original) The semiconductor device of claim 18, wherein the refractory metal comprises titanium.
20. (Canceled)
21. (New) A semiconductor device comprising:
- a semiconductor substrate;
 - a first electrode formed over the semiconductor substrate;
 - a capping layer over the first electrode, wherein the capping layer comprises a refractory nitride and the first electrode comprises a metal;
 - a first conductive smoothing layer formed over the capping layer, wherein the first conductive smoothing layer has a surface roughness less than that of the capping layer;

a dielectric layer formed on the first conductive smoothing layer; and
a second electrode formed over the dielectric layer.